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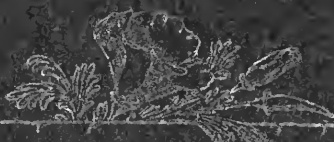
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California Idylls and Other Poems

BY

ELLA MAY SEXTON

AUTHOR OF

STORIES OF CALIFORNIA, MISSION POEMS
AND WHAT THE CHILDREN SAY

SAN FRANCISCO 1920





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CALIFORNIA AT CHRISTMAS

“December” calls the Year—but rose and
bee

And meadow-lark with trills of sweetest
tune

Say “No, ’tis June!”

Stern black and white the calendar’s decree,
Yet we who read, bewildered, turn to see
Wide intervalles of tender green, and thrill
To fire of southern sun caressing still
December’s noon.

What dawns late-flushed with mingled gold
and rose,

That slowly brighten, till each perfect day
Smiles hours away

Under a cloudless turquoise sky! Then
shows

The pearly bubble of the moon, that grows
To luminous whiteness as the low sun
waness;

While, as the planets burn, December
feigns

June’s mellow ray.

Unchanged the spires of cypress, and the
sweep

Of crowding hosts of gum-trees up the hill,
Where summer still

With gold of vagrant poppies flecks the
steep;

Yet winter violets bloom with fragrance
deep.

Perplexed, entranced, we are but sure this
seems

The “Land of afternoon”—and lotus-
dreams

Our senses thrill!

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WITH CHRISTMAS VIOLETS TO HER

From sunny gardens where no blight
Of winter mars their perfect bloom,
These purple violets waft delight
Of sweet perfume.

Across wide, desolate wastes of snow,
With breath of summer swiftly fare,
Where stern December skies brood low
On gardens bare.

Tell her of sapphire sky and sea,
Of warm, entrancing sunshine here,
Of green fields fair as Arcady,
Where larks sing clear.

Yet, Sweet, 'twere Arcady, though snows
Lay deep along each frosty way,
If but your cheek could lean its rose
To mine today!

A CHRISTMAS CONTRAST—EAST AND WEST

Bells of Christmas, a carillon sending
Of silver chimes through the sunny day,
Cloudless azure of June sky bending
Over the sapphire bay—
*Bitter the Christmas there, and snowing,
Keen the rough winds blowing!*

Sunshine flooding the purple distance
Of farther mountain, and hillsides near;
Violets breathing with sweet insistence,
“Winter is banished here!”
*Frozen and bleak the garden-spaces
Lift their desolate faces.*

Larks in our grassy meadows trilling,
Love and hope in their raptures told;
Clusters of lavish poppies spilling
Bright, brimming cups of gold—
*Silent the woodlands gray, where only
Bare fields shiver, lonely.*

Lightly fall in our golden weather
Strokes of time for the flying hours;
Fair Earth smiles with the Year, together
Marking our paths with flowers—
*Long the winter's reign, and weary,
Cold December dreary!*

WILD COLUMBINES

Gay, elfin dancers poised for flight
Where woodland shadows shimmer,
Or fluttering up yon windy height
Your scarlet kirtles glimmer
In rout fantastic, led, perchance,
By Pan, with airy fluting;
Fauns, too, with shy, elusive glance
Your straggling ranks saluting.

A host of sprites in forest-green
With wandering winds coquetting,
While golden-tasseled bonnets lean
Tip-tilted by their fretting.
Each merry nod, and beckoning fling
The wild bees answer, knowing
Your horns of honey freely swing,
Nor wait reluctant going.

For you the children, columbine,
Reach eager hands with laughter,
Your slender sprays, close-clasped, to pine
In drooping beauty after;
But all ungathered, smiling near,
Or from the hillside calling,
Your countless sisters bend, to hear
The children's footsteps falling.

Of all the laughing flowers, that hold
Spring's carnival, a-Maying,
You elves in harlequin red and gold
Are gayest, farthest straying;
To redwoods, fields or storm-scarred verge
Of mountain cliffs you're faring,
And, wind-blown, toss near ocean's surge
Your scarlet trumpets flaring.

“WHAT DREAMS MAY COME”

Haunting me ever, there comes and goes
A line from an old song's tender close,
Its burden the sweetest—the saddest, too,
For the altered lives it has echoed
through—

“Love, had you loved me;” the words are
few
But through them an infinite passion flows.

“Love, had you loved me;” perhaps the
key
To many a grief this thought may be;
To a sorrow that stirs at the magic strain
And steps from its prison, barred in vain,
To crush with the old, relentless pain
The heart that has guarded it faithfully.

Ah, fondest and truest, whose brown eyes
shine
With the tenderest lovelight, I am thine
Forever, thou heart of my heart—and yet
The breath of an April violet
Wakens a longing, a deep regret
For eyes as blue, that were never mine!

“Love, had you loved me,” what life would
be
Attuned to that passionate melody!
Sad hearts unblest, that must still repine
For the draught untasted of Love's rich
wine,
Bitter the memories that haunt this line
Of “Love, had you loved me,” so mourn-
fully.

TO A DECEMBER VIOLET

Dear violet, a passing guest
With Lenten gown of purple dressed
In colder clime,
Sweet saint, uplifting tender eyes
To April's pale and changing skies—
As brief your prime!

But constant to our sunshine, here
We find you, love you through the year,
As friend, nay, more;
Fast drive the wind-swept rains, and, too,
The frost smites frailer bloom, while you
Smile as before.

No passionate rose are you, sweetheart,
With red lips curved to all, apart
In shyest grace
You nestle—yet the garden's pride
Of bloom and beauty wanes beside
Your dainty face.

In sheltering leaves you hide, demure,
From careless glance or touch secure,
But lovers true
Led by your perfume faintly sweet—
A breath of heaven, perchance—we greet
Your heavenly blue.

Ah, little love, your calm content
Shames restless souls with striving spent.
Would we might find
Nepenthe in the sunshine; cease
To war with Fate, and smile in peace,
To life resigned!

A CITY OUTLOOK

From eyrie lifted high o'er clamorous
ways—
And so remote the hurrying throng below,
Mere puppets in some strange, fantastic
show,
Play on their silent parts—the far, clear
gaze,
Caught here by spires that pierce a crowded
maze
Of roofs and lofty towers, seeks there the
glow
Of gilded domes through veiling vapors
low.

Flung on the west winds, stream along the
haze
Long wavering plumes, snow white, or
dusky gray,
Or dark as night; each smoky pennant flies
And marks where, close imprisoned, breaths
and sighs
The giant Toil, still urging, day by day,
Unwilling slaves. Beyond, brown hills
arise
To meet the bending arch of deep blue
skies.

TO-DAY

To-day is ours, this moment all we know,
So quaff its cup of joy, kind fates bestow;
"To all we love," the toast, and vow with me
No draught more precious flows in Arcady!

A MISSION LEGEND

Long ago, when the good Franciscans
Founded the Missions quaint,
Named in liquid and sweet Castilian,
Each honored a patron saint.
There were Carlos and San Fernando,
Fair Barbara, San Jose,
Miguel and most-loved Carmelo,
Juan and San Luis-Rey.

Adobes, white walled, set in billows
Of emerald vines and wheat,
Nearly a score of these Missions o'er
Long coast leagues rose complete.
Still Father Serra murmured,
For to Francis (name revered
By these brethren gray) had never a
Church
In this new world yet been reared.

"But," spake one, "if our San Francisco
To some goodly port will guide,
We will rear a stately Mission there
For that sainted founder's pride."
Long they searched, till this splendid
harbor
Before their vision lay;
"We were led by the Saint!" they shouted
then,
'Tis San Francisco's bay!"

There sparkled the quiet waters,
Unruffled by keel or prow,
Never a sail on the shining blue
Where flutter the world's flags now.

A Mission Legend

Here a Mission new they blessed,
Nor dreamed that a slumbering city lay
On the sand dunes' shifting crest.

And the Church of Francis flourished.
The Indian converts though
When the mellow Angelus bells rang clear
Their Aves whispered low,
To the tender Mother of Sorrows
Dolores, finding there
At the Lady's shrine a blessed peace
For those who burdens bear.

And pointing high on the hillsides
(That round the Mission walled)
A mighty figure couching there
The Sleeping Lady called;
Brodered with golden poppies
Her mantle's brown folds flow
From the Twin Peaks of her bosom bare
To the church at her feet below.

In her ears the ocean thundered
Nor broke the magic spell;
"Dolores," whispered the Indians,
"Our Lady sleeps—and well."
But at night she steps from her drapery
Of fleecy fog (they told)
To watch o'er the slumbering Mission
Till the roses of dawn unfold.

So ever to Madre Dolores
The trusting peons prayed;
Francis the Good for daylight,
But at night and unafraid,
Were her sleeping suppliants sheltered
By the tender Mother of Pain.

And all her unguessed the city

OUR CHRISTMAS BERRIES

High on the leaning hillsides climbing
Yon purple wall of the mountain-flanks,
Out of the chaparral's thickest tangle
That rims the rushing torrent's banks,
With a brilliant glimmer of vivid scarlet
Our Christmas berries smile, and shine
From a maze of oak and glossy laurel,
Manzanita and wind-swept pine.

Up the wild, rough trails in the canyons,
Crushing the ferns, and wet, sweet bay,
While the pungent odor of yerba-buena
Follows our breathless, headlong way;
Clambering high for more perfect clusters,
Set red-ripe in their golden-green—
O, the joy of it, and far gazing
From heights won bravely, the seaward
scene!

Perchance for robin as red, and blue-jay,
This feast of Nature's is spread alone,
But lavish, as all this fair land's treasures,
Free as the sunshine the poorest own,
So to the dwellers where, thronging closely,
Glimpses of woodland beauty are rare,
Joy and color these Christmas berries
Bring to the dullness of ceaseless care.

What care we for the alien holly,
Stiff and stately with ancient pride
Of Merrie England? We crown our revels
With sun-kissed garlands, and wreath
beside
Branches of redwood with fragrance sylvan,
Grandest of mansions, or cot within;
Lending the smile of Mother Nature

I

RONDEAU

Those other days! Where is the heart
Keeps not some jewels, shrined apart,
Of precious intervals that linger
Untouched by Time's relentless finger?
Fair days when Love had fullest part
Enchanting earth with magic art;
Hope's rainbows, too, their charms impart

Those other days.

Days memory guards with jealous art
Lest each remembrance sweet depart,
And bids their rosy glamour linger
Untouched by Time's relentless finger,
Dear other days!

II

RONDEAU

Again the spring! Strange miracle and
sweet,
Renewed each slow-paced year as April's
feet

We follow while she beckons, luring,
wiling

To grassy fields where nod gay poppies,
smiling

Yet though the sun's caresses warm entreat,
With deep and subtle sadness, too, replete
Our hearts, and wistfully each year we greet

Fair earth to sea and shore and hill
beguiling

Again the Spring.

For far Life's goal; the spring's fond hopes
with fleet

Elusive step and mocking laugh retreat.

So long the way, so weary we of smiling,
And empty hearts with empty words

beguiling;

Lashed on by Fate, despairing, we repeat.

DUSK AT POINT BONITA

Around Bonita's cliffs the wild Pacific
Frets like a fettered giant at his chain;
In helpless fury roar the baffled surges
Beating against the cruel rocks in vain.

No soft, low lap of slumbrous waters
ebbing,
No sunny stretch of level beach is here;
The sheer crag lashed by angry spray
uprises
From eddies dark, the boom of breakers
near.

Afar, above the horizon's rim, there trem-
bles
Against the tender blue one mellow star;
The long white films of fog are landward
drifting,
A vessel tossing on the heaving bar.

Lonely the light-house rears its slender
column
Crowned with the beacon star of vivid
flame
That leaped to life when, startling in the
silence
The sunset gun for dying daylight came.

Around Bonita's cliffs the weird dusk
deepens,
Like ghostly sails, the fog athwart the
sky;
The west wind lulled, the waves are fainter
calling,
The lustrous radiance of the light streams
by.

Through the gray gloom white wings are
 swiftly flashing,
 As sea-gulls scream above the breakers'
 moans;
They seek their nests where fade into the
 twilight
The misty outlines of the Farallones.

THE WILLOW TREE

Forever at my casement's square
A drooping willow sways and moans,
The faintest breath of wandering wind
That scarcely stirs the slumbering air,
Wakes from the willow answering tones.

All day the golden summer long
From its deep bower of tender green
My willow breathes an idyll sweet,
A dreamy, murmuring woodland song
Like dryads trill at sports unseen.

But now when from the moaning sea
The winds rush landward and the rain
Driven by the fierce gale, wildly beats,
Lashed by the storm the groaning tree
Writhes like a giant racked with pain.

A secret that I had not guessed
So closely folded was it kept,
The willow guards no more. Poor birds,
The leaves that hid thy sheltered nest
December's hand has widely swept.

Still sobs the wind and drips away
The weary rain. I dimly see
The tossing willow, and its boughs
Through deepening gloom of waning day
Like ghostly fingers beckon me.

A CHRISTMAS ROSE AT MONTEREY

Rose, at the Monterey Mission unfolding,
Rose the good Padres once cherishing,
trained

On these adobe walls gnarled stems
upholding
Chalices perfumed, and sunset-pink
stained,

Rosa Castilian, sweet rose of the Mission,
Secrets, ah, surely, your gold hearts
retained

As the long century drowsily waned.

Rose, did they whisper those old days, but
aves,

While gay boleros soft tinkled without
Corridors white in the moonlight, and path-
ways

Darkened where twin shadows flitted
about?

Rosa Castilian, sweet rose of the Mission,
Never a kiss set your pink lips to pout,
Never a languorous lover to flout?

Rose, in some odorous twilight fast-flying,
(Waiting the Angelus prayer to repeat)
Stooped not a fond cavalier, softly sighing
Into your warm ear a confidence sweet?

Rosa Castilian, sweet rose of the Mission,
Once you leaned, surely, some ardent
heart's beat

Quickened by ancient romances, to greet?

A Christmas Rose at Monterey

Rose on these crumbling walls tenderly
cherished
Years to you naught but the sunshine and
rain,
Dust are the Padres, their sepulchres
perished;
Moldering missal and vestments remain,
Rosa Castilian, sweet rose of the Mission,
Long-vanished glories their voiceless
refrain,
Passing of power Franciscan, of Spain.

Rose with this austral sun's golden wine
filling
Lavish cups, brimming and perfumed
to-day,
No breath of winter, nor icy blast chilling
Bloom of December as constant as May,
Rosa Castilian, sweet rose of the Mission,
Ah, but the magical tales you might say,
Pink lips from golden hearts curving
away!

IT WAS BOHEMIA!

Gray August days, when ceaselessly
Strong tradewinds scourge the moaning sea
And sullen shore. Far inland drift
White wraiths of fog that shadowy, swift,
Athwart blurred hills and sand-dunes flee
Or, clinging, veil each dripping tree.
The sunless sky broods silently;
Of golden light no gleam, no rift
Gray August days.
Sad sea-girt coast, how wistfully
The sapphire skies of Arcady
Where redwoods stately columns lift,
And radiant floods of sunshine sift,
Recur in vivid life to me
Gray August days!

LAVENDER, SWEET

At a crowded corner the "lavender-man"
To passers-by unheeding
Offers the sweet, old-fashioned herb
With patient, silent pleading.
The gay crowd surges on and on
(A pageant ever shifting)
But vaguely noting, on Self intent,
This pungent fragrance drifting.

For me a grief and a memory dear
This perfume wakens, bringing
Back from the past a garden quaint
With the purple spikes up-springing
Of lavender sweet in the August days,
And two who loitered idly
Nor dreamed that a mocking Fate had set
Their paths diverging widely.

Two who lingered to pluck the stalks
Of lavender sweet, unguessing
The charm of that golden summer day
Was one of Love's possessing;
That their blossoming time of youth and
life
Was at Love's touch unfolding
Till only two, and the lavender flowers
The happy world seemed holding.

Two—and a cloud—then an angry word—
A rift that widened slowly
As the lavender, gray and faded, died
Two parted, sundered wholly;
Yet still as the lavender's fragrance drifts
That crowded corner nearing,
Half-sweet, half-bitter the old grief wakes
That "might have been" endearing.

AN ODE TO THE WEST WIND

(And Owed a Long Time)

Thou glorious western breeze!
(But wait, until I turn my back to get
One breath, at least, with ease.)
Here, from far leagues of heaving blue, and
wet
With salt spume of the sea,
(Uncurled my bangs must be!
A perfect fright I look,) by Aeolus sped
From his vast Cave of Winds (each hairpin
fled).

Thy sigh with ozone fraught
(Likewise with sand) new life and fresh
hast brought
To toilers in this city maelstrom foul,
(A sigh! Methinks a raging, roaring howl!)
And careworn eyes uplift
As low thy pinions drift
With gray fog streaming from those mighty
wings.
(And signs—and cobblestones—and hats—
and things.)

Strong wind, untrammelled, free,
(Though not of dust both weeping eyes
agree.)
From warm seas of the Orient swiftly flown
(Chilled to the bone,
I doubt that legend). Dost thou, trade wind,
bear
What messages, what stores
From rich and sunkissed shores
In white flotillas proudly homeward—(there,
My hat's a wreck!) Gay zephyr unconfined,
(Though would you were!) in sportive mood
inclined—
(Worlds for a sheltered nook, there to re-
treat
And praise some more this gale, my ode
complete!)

TWO PICTURES

THERE

Bitter the keen winds blowing under sullen
 skies and low,
Where the dying sun, his brief task done,
 sinks blood-red over the snow,
Snow with its merciless beauty, snow with
 its deadly hold
On the pulses warm of each shuddering form
 that dares the cruel cold.

God pity the shelterless vagrant, whose wan-
 dering steps and slow
Falter and fail in the icy gale, while darkens
 the waste below—
O, the scourging lash of the blizzard, the
 blinding, stinging sleet,
The gaunt white wolves of Hunger and Cold
 that follow grim and fleet!

HERE;

New grass in all the sunny spaces;
 New robes for earth's brown breast
The rains weave fast, in vacant places
 By southern sun caressed.

New hopes through hearts despairing,
 thrilling,
New life a glad world knows,
With larks in greenest meadows trilling
 Where gold of poppies glows.

Red are the garden-roses budding;
 Through casements wide, the room
Warm winds with violet odors flooding,
 Knows Spring's dear, faint perfume.

CHRISTMAS SONG FOR CALIFORNIA

No winter's blight our Christmas knows,
No bitter blasts, nor sparkling snows,
The old year wanes, the old year goes

While halcyon hours
Drift on enchanted pinions fleet
In sunny gardens, where with sweet
And haunting perfume violets greet
Late summer's flowers.

Scarce dream we Christmas almost near
So blue December skies appear,
So green the beckoning fields, so clear
Rise hills remote.

The golden present thralls, no past
Nor morrow's cares dark shadows cast,
Just on Time's dial, flying fast,
Bright hours we note.

Ring out, glad Christmas bells, nor cease
From snows to palms by tropic seas,
Your tidings of good-will and peace
Exultant sound;
Ring out, blest tale of Love Divine,
Where Christmas wreaths of northern pine,
Our berries red, or holly twine
The world around.

A CALIFORNIA THANKSGIVING

Is this Thanksgiving? November,
With the tender green of the hills
Splashed with deep gold of poppies
While sweet the meadow-lark trills?
Thanksgiving—and violets blooming?
O, by some wizard's device
The year has skipped those pages
Of the almanac's "snow and ice"!

November? And sunshine pouring
From a cloudless turquoise sky
While steeped in a trance of languor
Warm, golden hours drift by?
Gardens ablaze with color,
And fragrant as vanished June
Masking in robes of summer;
Can winter come—and soon?

Where are those dark, cold mornings
With rime of hoar-frost white,
The bare and leafless branches
That moaned in the gales of night?
Those gray days slowly dying
In an angry flame of red,
While keen the flash of starlight
In the steely blue o'erhead?

That is November! Thanksgiving
Brings snow to drift and hide
Brown hills, while merry sleigh-bells
Bring rovers home to bide.
This in the land of sunshine
Seems Indian summer's prime,
With the frost's destroying fingers
Stayed by a smiling Time.

A FLIGHT WITH PUCK

*“I’ll put a girdle round about the earth in
forty minutes.”*

Midsummer Night’s Dream.

When half this happy world in Sleep’s
embrace

Close-folded lies, and I, denied, without
That blissful pale, cast restless arms
about,

One boon remains, though Sleep avert her
face,

For tricky Puck I call from realms of
space;

My spirit, and that wanderer gay, seek
out

Far countries by his swift, unerring
route,

And lingering, flying, claim each longed-for
place.

Venice is mine, the Bridge of Sighs
restrains

Our steps as sunset fades; proud Rome
unveils

Her treasures, or we float adown the Nile,
And of a dearer journey dream the while,
Where sang the Master—and the nightin-
gales

Sing yet his threnody in English lanes!

IN THE FOOTHILLS

Oh, the joy, the deep delight of living
Through strong pulses throbbing, Nature
giving

Floods of sunshine, golden

Wine of life;

Bends the sky, a hollow turquoise, over
Red-brown hills that beckon me, a rover,
On to breathe mid-summer's

Fragrance rife.

On through tangled depths of chaparral
breasting

Up steep sunburnt slopes, rough boulders
cresting,

Purple heights unconquered

Fairer rise;

Sweet the hard-won rest, the new endeavor
Raptured senses thrilling, luring ever

On, till dark each shadowy

Canyon lies.

Oh, to hold Time fast, and bid him measure
Life to just this harmony of pleasure,
Bidding Summer linger

In the land;

Let the world, yon high horizon barring,
Fret and strive, unheeded here its warring,
For these silent summits

Peace command.

A GLIMPSE OF ARCADY

In clamorous waves the city's roar
Beats on and on through stifling airs,
With deafening din re-echoing o'er
Her stony, clattering thoroughfares;
Yet, inner silence broods with me—
The charmed trance of Arcady.

Shut in by towering walls, the sky
A pallid glimpse, God's sunlight dear
Past dusty casements flickering by,
With Toil and Gain for warders, here
A yearning prisoner held, for me
Still smile the fields of Arcady.

Dull, dull and cold each printed page,
Long-columned figures sway and reel,
While round me fellow-toilers wage
Life's struggle, chained to Fortune's
wheel;
From duty's lash a truant, free
I roam with fauns in Arcady.

Ah, Heart of Mine, await me there,
While snows of orange-blossoms fall,
Till at your lead our footsteps fare
And follow changeless Summer's call.
Fulfilled our every dream shall be
In yonder longed-for Arcady!

SISTER DOLORES

Pure, placid face with linen aureole bound
In saintly guise,
Still on your rosary bent in thought profound,
Those prayerful eyes.
Dolores, tell me are your cloistered walls
From sin secure?
Where neither storm nor stress nor sorrow
falls
Does peace endure?

Pale lily, nurtured in dim convent close
(Love's sun denied
Whose ardent kisses woo the blushing rose
To crimson pride.)
What dower of sweetness all ungathered fills
That untouched heart?
What inner song of calm delight so thrills
Your life apart?

In constant prayer, in faithful toiling spent,
Your days serene;
Reproved, we idlers watch such calm content
With reverent mien.
Unmarred by lines of vain desire, of care,
Your rose-leaf cheek,
An aura sweet of blessed goodness there,
Devoutly meek.

And stirs no grief, no fair remembrance calls
From yesterdays
When on your crucifix the moonlight falls;
Or garden ways
Are blue with violets in the wistful spring,
Wakes no regret
For vanished face, for raptures lost, to bring
Tears bitter yet?

Love's anguished night, Love's golden days
 unguessed,
 Hope's restless tides
And ebb of fear knows not your gentle breast
 Where heaven abides;
That bitter-sweet, to me Life's all, Life's
 best,
 Nor for release
From blissful pain, Dolores, could I rest
 In cloistered peace.

LAKE TAHOE

Gem of the high Sierra, lucent, clear,
 Your emerald shallows mirror emerald
 shore
And each long ripple paints that vergo
 once more,
Till trembling, shifting, these illusions near
Fairer than crags and pines remote appear.
 What mysteries strange your depths of
 sapphire store,
 What whispered legends, myths of Indian
 lore,
Told on enchanted waters drifting here
To watch the opaline fires of sunset pale.
 Where snow-flecked Tallac towers, the
 far peaks glow
 With misty radiance lingering, fading
 slow.
Too soon dim dusk and darkening sky
 prevail,
On Tahoe's quiet breast the last gleams fail,
 And mellow Hesper in the west burns low.

NEW YEAR'S EVE IN THE PHILIPPINES

On the firing line in Luzon when the sickly
moon hung low
In a lurid haze of copper, and the flooded
rice-fields show
Glitter near of drowning moonbeams, glitter
far where rifles peep—
It was Scott, clean dazed with fever, fell to
crooning (half asleep):
“O, the Kansas prairies stretching, white
with moonlight on the snow,
O, the Kansas farmhouse windows flaring
out their rosy glow
From the fire-place where they gather,
neighbors from the farms about,
For it's New Year's Eve in Kansas, and
they watch the Old Year out.”

On the firing line in Luzon many a homesick
heart beat fast
With a bitter, hopeless longing as that
hoarse voice sobbed at last;
(Like a hailstorm fell the bullets; never
cared he how they sped)
Babbling louder, “Boys, it's ‘watch night,’
don't you see the tables spread?
‘Watch night’ back in Kansas—feasting,
plenty—God! we're starving here!
‘Watch night’ and beside you some one,
blushing as you whisper, ‘Dear,
You're the last I'll see this Old Year, so my
New Year's bride you'll be,’
And her kiss while twelve was striking
brought a glad New Year to me.”

New Year's Eve in the Philippines

On the firing line in Luzon, "Down!" they
shouted; "Hold him, men!"
But he staggered upward, forward, with
that choking voice again
Sobbing, calling, "Mother, Molly, don't you
know me, wife? It's Will!"
In that deadly rain of bullets falling head-
long, whispering still,
"Dear, it's 'watch night,' and together we
will watch the Old Year go;
Kiss once more as twelve rings gladly in the
New Year from the snow;
Bitter cold these Kansas prairies; hold me
closer, Molly dear"—
Scott of Kansas, dead in Luzon, smiling,
welcomed in the year.

MERE ATOMS, LORD!

"Worlds for another day!" the felon cried,
And heard swift hammers on his scaffold
ring.
"The dawn again!" a girl despairing
sighed;
"Dear God, I prayed that kindly Death
might bring
His Lethean draught." Of both unheeding,
soared
The splendid sun, by millions blest, adored.

MOTORING IN GOLDEN GATE PARK

*Won from the shifting sand-dunes
That trade-winds whirl and heap
While the restless ocean-surges
Forever landward sweep,
There stretches a noble pleasaunce—
The people's fair estate—
In the city of Saint Francis
That guards the Golden Gate.

Here are hill and vale and woodland
With dear delights at call,
And the glitter and liquid plashing
Of lake and waterfall;
Trees and flowers of the rarest—
But the level roads that roll
Like a ribbon bright unfolding
Bring joy to the motor-soul!

For, ah, the bliss of speeding
With one—the dearest and best—
Into the heart of the sunset
And the amber glow of the west;
Of the musical, rhythmical humming
Of perfect gear and gait
As the reeling miles go flying
In this Park of the Golden Gate!

We have distanced every trouble,
Old Care forsakes the race;
In this mad, sweet, onward rushing
But Life and Love keep pace.
Till the sun in the broad Pacific
Dips low his shield of gold,
And a myriad blossoms of starlight
On our homeward way unfold.

* Golden Gate Park of a thousand acres was re-claimed from a waste of sand-dunes.

A BALLAD OF THE KISS

That danger may lurk in a kiss
Scientific professors are holding;
They seek to deprive us of this
Consolation by grimly unfolding
Tales of possible microbes in wait,
Of bacilli deadly ensnaring
Each innocent pair—soon or late—
While kisses they fondly are sharing.

That danger may lurk in a kiss
No one will deny it completely
Who has yielded to fetters that this
Soft touch of red lips rivets neatly.
There is fear, too, of losing the next;
For who does not ponder with sorrow
On the kiss indecision, perplexed,
Put off for a ne'er-arrived morrow.

And danger may lurk in the kiss
A stranger inflicts on the baby—
An elderly relative's! This
Choice salute has some terrors, it maybe;
But given two souls held as one
By love's immemorial passion,
And there's naught half so sweet 'neath the
sun

As a kiss in the time-honored fashion.

Yes; danger may lurk in a kiss;
But who would not risk it, declaring
That exquisite moment of bliss
Worth microbes innumerable daring?
Oh! fossils antique, why dispel
With a microscope Love's dream Elysian,
And facts so detestable tell
Of bacteriological vision?

ENVOY

Prince, danger may lurk in this kiss
You are begging with words of affection;
For an instant's non-sterilized bliss
Would you risk an endemic infection?

BREAD AND CHEESE AND KISSES

I've always been a rolling stone,
Nor gathered any moss,
A ready hand, a ready glass,
For all I came across—
But, now, for love of you, my dear,
No longer will I roam,
I'll settle down, a married man,
And have a cosy home—

Yes, it's home, my honey,
With a pocket full of money,
Home and wife, my honey,
When my ship comes in!

Somewhere upon Life's ocean wide,
She's on her homeward run,
That gallant ship with shining sails.
She's lettered just A-1;
Her cargo all of dollars bright,
The steersman, Hope, will bring
Safe into harbor soon, my dear—
And then we'll buy the ring;

For it's home, my honey,
With a pocket full of money,
Home and wife, my honey,
When that ship comes in!

Bread and Cheese and Kisses

I wouldn't ask the girl I love
To share but bread and cheese,
A crust and work for me, my dear,
For you a life of ease;
And the wolf that waits without the door
Drives Love in fear away—
So plight your faith to me, my dear
And wait a happier day

When it's home, my honey,
And a pocket full of money—
Home and wife, my honey,
When that ship comes in!

What? You say that ship is but a dream,
And old and gray we'd be,
While bread and cheese—and kisses, too,
Is feast enough? Why, see,
If that's your will, my bonny lass,
Then hand in hand we'll fare—
Though light our purse, our lighter hearts
Shall sweet and bitter share;

So it's home, my honey,
And never mind the money;
Home and wife, my honey,
Ere—that ship comes in!

FIVE O'CLOCK TEA

(From Joe's Point of View)

A pink and white pastel
In her picturesque, fluffy frock,
My lady serves us Russian tea
In marvelous Worcester cups, while we
Her guests, admiring, smile and pass
The nothings that serve for wit—alas—
At five o'clock.

The cold dusk deepens without,
But here is the very heart
Of June in this perfumed and rose-red
glow,
And the warmth of her slow sweet smile,
and though
I have but a glance, as the gay throng
sways,
I count this one of Life's perfect days
Thus set apart.

Half the men of our set
Rave of her beauty and grace;
I'm but her humblest slave, I know,
Yet even a queen may stoop—and so
In the wildest, maddest of dreams divine
I dare to picture as some day mine,
Her proud, proud face.

She and I then, alone—
What rapturous bliss were it true!
The world shut out as the daylight dies
While tender the look in her dreamy eyes,
With white hands hovering deftly o'er
A tete-a-tete service, she smiles—to pour
Tea just for two!

A MAY CAROL

Such a gay world is the May world
In this perfect sunny weather!
There are snowy daisies smiling on the
lawn;
Saintly white rose nods to red rose,
Golden poppies laugh together,
And the meadow larks call gladly at the
dawn.

'Tis an old world and a cold world,
But the sun's an ardent lover,
And his glowing kisses thrill her bosom
fair,
Till the May earth is a new earth
And the grass and blossoms cover
All the hillsides and the gardens every-
where.

Now the cold rains and the frost-blight
At the touch of spring have vanished,
And our pulses throb at kisses of the May,
So from sad hearts like the young hearts,
Should the clouds of grief be banished,
And a flood of joyous sunlight fill the day.

With the May days, dusty town ways
Are our restless spirits spurning,
For the dreamy charm of Nature longing
so;
For the woodpaths and the brookpaths
And the sound of waters yearning,
Where our Mother Earth is calling, calling
low.

A PICTURE OF '49

When the water came up to Montgomery
street

In the days of '49'ers,
This canvas town was a swarming hive
Of the bravest—and quickest—men alive,
Who thronged saloons and filled each
“dive”

With cheerful clink of “shiners.”

When the water came up to Montgomery
street;

Its blue waves softly flowing
Where the Mills and Mutual brick walls
rest,
Thick chaparral crowded o'er Nob Hill's
crest,
And trade winds over the sand dunes west
Of Powell street were blowing.

When the water came up to Montgomery
street—

Those were the days to live in!
When Gold was king and woman queen;
The pistol law—or a long knife keen—
While to chance—or pleasure—the hours
between

The dusk and dawn were given.

When the water came up to Montgomery
street,

And Pioneer veins throbbed madly
In the fierce “gold fever's” wildest spells,
The chimes of the Mission Dolores bells—
Faint o'er the din of the gambling “hells”
Touched hearts that answered sadly.

When the water came up to Montgomery street—

Oh, Argonauts, strong yet tender!
Free-lances of Fortune, her golden prize
Won by the few, from the many flies;
And struggling hosts perished with dying
eyes

Upraised to its fatal splendor.

SONG

Sweetheart of mine, what art of thine

Didst use to gently wind me
Around thy dainty finger, till
I'm but the creature of thy will?
Slave of thy ring, I wonder still
Such slender chains can bind me.

Is it thy hair, oh sweetheart fair,
In gold lengths softly shining?
Or no, within those deep brown eyes
Perchance the subtle secret lies;
One long, long look may yet surprise
This charm that mocks divining.

Red lips of thine, oh sweetheart mine,
The mystery might discover.
Entrancing curves and dimples, pray
Will you this cunning witch betray?
"No magic here," thy sweet lips say,
"I only love my lover."

THE SONGS OF A PEOPLE

“Let me make the songs of a people—and
I care not who makes the laws.”

Ah, to make the songs of a people;
Grand songs that thrilling deep
With a living fire of swift desire
A nation's heart-strings sweep;
Dear songs of home and fireside—
Or battle-chants that ring
With the clash of steel, as foemen wheel,
And a mighty chorus sing!

Let me make the songs of a people
Folk-songs, that echoing down
From sire to son long years, have won
The country's wide renown;
The cradle-songs of a people,
Their solemn hymns of praise—
Those words that mould, with a subtle hold,
Men's souls for upward ways.
Yes, to make the songs of a people;
The ones that mothers croon
To the dreaming ears of the babe, who hears
Through life that haunting tune;
Sweet calls of the happy children
In rhyming melody,
Their fairy-plays, or the lilting lays
They carol, gay and free.

The Song of a People

Let me make the songs of a people
That the hardy toilers choose,
Their chanty-strains, as the anchor-chains
Heave up from the harbor-ooze;
The runes of the northern sailors,
Or fisher-chants that fail
Through the closing night, as the ghostly
white
Of fog dims voice and sail.

Thus to make the songs of a people,
What joy those strains to write!
The curb and chain of Law, in vain
Would shackle might and right;

But deep in the hearts of a people
The power of Song endures;
No laws can teach, or as surely reach
The heights that Song secures.

UNDER THE SEARCH LIGHT

With the human tide, one drifts
Through the shadowy pathways' gloom,
When out of the sea of faces, lifts
As the splendid shaft of silver shifts,
One like a rose in bloom.

'Tis the tender face of my love,
Lost love who was never mine;
Only her wistful look I meet—
Her glance that has held me in bondage sweet
While the slow-paced years decline.

Only her face—and it fades
As the strong white glare departs.
Darkness and silence blur the scene,
And the ocean of Life rolls on between
That passing touch of our hearts.

THE FIRST RAIN

When, hesitant, the rain's light footfalls
greet
These arid hills, long waiting, brown and
bare,
What faintly answering fragrance fills
the air?
A happy sigh from prisoned wildflowers
sweet
Gliding like ghosts each from its deep
retreat
At near release of weary drought's
despair.

Swift fancy bids the long procession fare
Till hills and intervalles gay ranks repeat
With gold of buttercups, blue iris, dear
And sweetest violets; here the orange flare
Of joyous poppies, lupins straggling there.
Bright perfumed cohorts, viewless yet
how clear!
Phantoms of summer, wraiths of lost delight
The first rain summons into airy flight.

PANSIES

A little knot of pansies—
Bronze and purple and gold—
Rise and fall in a dainty nest
Of creamy lace on my lady's breast,
As we sway to the cadences soft and low
Of dreamy waltzes, to and fro,
This little knot of pansies
Their dewy fragrance hold.

Pansies

“Ah, happy knot of pansies,”
I whisper with a sigh;
“Yet the tiny faces careless wear
Their priceless honors, nestling there
In the heaven of flowers, with perfume faint
And cool as in some garden quaint,
These happy little pansies
In envied sweetness lie.”

“Nay, envy not my pansies”—
And her voice is silver-clear—
“Worn for an hour, they fade and die,
Their velvet petals withered lie
Crushed and broken and cast aside,
Vain their purple and golden pride;
Poor little knot of pansies
They buy such honors dear.”

“Yet, blest for ever these pansies
If they linger but an hour;
Nestled in amber silk and lace,
Clasped by glimmer of pearls in place,
Sweet were death in such royal state—
But the heaven sweet of thy bosom, Fate
Gives only to these pansies,
Unconscious, thankless flowers.”

Withered to-day the pansies,
Tarnished their bronze and gold;
Yet sweetest memories grace bestow,
With pristine beauty their pale leaves glow.
We smile and guard them with tender
thought
Of the spell their fairy faces wrought.
This little knot of pansies
Our joined lives precious hold.

RONDEAU

Thy dearest friend? Take not the one whose
 praise
 And fulsome flattery regale thine ear,
 That ready echo, sweet but insincere,
Voicing a bland approval of thy ways;
Nor him who holds a mirror that portrays—
 And nothing more—thine imperfections
 clear.

For thy soul's mate whom long years but
 endear,
 Whose heart to thine respondeth nor
 betrays
 (For dearest friend)
Choose one who, wisely kind, to heights
 above
 Mere Self, directs thy course with firm
 intent,
Who guards thy life with tender touch
 of love
 From sin's foul blight. . . Smiling at thy
 content
Sad in thy grief—Then truly heaven-sent,
 Thy dearest friend!

A DREAM OF POPPIES

Brown hills long parched, long lifting to the
blue

Of summer's brilliant sky but russet hue
Of sere grass shivering in the trade-wind's
sweep,

Soon, with light footfalls, from their
tranced sleep

The first rains bid your poppies rise anew;
And trills the larg exultant summons, too.

How swift at Fancy's beck those gay
crowds leap

To glowing life! The eager green leaves
creep

For welcome first; then hooded buds, pale
gold,

Each tender shower and sun-kiss help unfold
Till smiling hosts crowd all the fields, and
till

A yellow sea of poppies breasts each hill
And breaks in joyous floods, as children hold
Glad hands the lavish cups as gladly fill.

MOST OF ALL

Dear to the hearts of Provence girls
In France, the beautiful, is this rhyme:
"He loves me—a little—not at all—
A great deal," then "the most of all."
A flower charm told in midsummer time,
When this sunny land is fair to behold
With Marguerite daisies, white and gold.

This is one picture summer shows:
Fanchon, the flower-girl, standing where
The climbing roses, creamy Lamarque,
Brush with their petals her tresses dark,
Gathering the daisies, white and fair;
Half in a dream, o'er her winsome face
Comes a sudden sweetness, a tender grace.

Over the daisies her bright face droops,
Softly she whispers the musical rhyme;
"He loves me a little," pausing to blush,
"A great deal," ah, what a rosy flush!
"A little, a great deal;" not this time;
In a silvery shower the petals fall;
"A little—a great deal—most of all."

"Most of all," the sweet lips say,
Dreamy and tender grow her eyes,
While leaf by leaf the charm is told,
O'er petals of silver and hearts of gold.
Now on her face a shadow lies;
"Not at all;" with a charming frown
The innocent daisies flutter down.

Most of All

Again she murmurs the legend old,
Half vexed, half laughing, and wholly sweet;
The flying petals, like rosy snow,
Drift from her fingers and falling low,
Flutter around her dainty feet.
“Most of all” is the last she tries—
“Yes, most of all,” a voice replies.

Over her shoulder a saucy face,
A daring arm round her bodice red—
Ah, Fanchon’s fortune is surely told;
No need of the daisies, white and gold,
To tell the words her lover has said,
Kissing her lips—’tis “under the rose”—
He loves her the most of all, she knows.

MANUEL'S SERENADE

List, list to the mandolin, *mi muy querida*,
Yet, soft as its cadences fall,
A melody sweeter my lips keep repeating,
Jovita, *mi alma*, each heart-throb is beating,
For Love holds my spirit in thrall.

Ah, lean from thy lattice, Jovita, *querida*,
Let fall the red rose from thy hair;
With kisses I'll cherish it fondly, divining
Thy sweet lips have pressed it to comfort me,
pining
Alone in the midnight's despair.

Thrice lonely thy garden, for haunted,
querida,
By visions of vanished delight;
The roses' rich perfume recalls thy dark
tresses,
Yon jasmine bower whispers of smiles and
caresses,
Where falls my lone shadow to-night

Now slumber and dream of thy lover,
querida,
Of Manuel who watches these hours.
Love wakes with the morrow, ah, sleep till
his greeting
Arouses thee, gladly, while swift speeds our
meeting,
For Love and the morrow are ours.

SUB ROSA

HE

Under the rose I kissed her, though
'Twas just her small white hand, I know;
But she must surely guess I love her!
A secret I would fain discover
Yet dread her frown, and lingering so
In present bliss, the heaven forego
That I might reach—and she bestow,
Were I her own acknowledged lover
Under the rose.

But risk the depths of utter woe
And lose those perfect lips? Ah, no;
'Tis happiness just now to hover
Upon the brink, her waiting lover,
And dream of kisses sweet, although
Under the rose!

SHE

Under the rose he kissed me!—Oh
Only my hand! He might, you know,
Have kissed my cheek, dear, timid lover!
I held my fan quite high to cover,
My blushes should he dare to. Though
His welcome footsteps come—and go—
He does not say he loves me, so
I can't his dearest wish discover
Under the rose!
Yet all his tender glances show
His heart is mine—and I—I know
While o'er my hand his kisses hover,
If he should seek my lips, sweet lover,
I could but faintly whisper "No,"
Under the rose!

YESTERDAY'S ROSE

Here's the rose you gave me, dear,
Gave but yesterday,
Crimson petals crushed apart
From its faintly perfumed heart,
Withered now—ah, beauty goes,
Heavy headed, fading rose,
Sweet but yesterday.

When this rose you gave me, dear,
Only yesterday,
Soft you murmured, with a kiss,
"Rose to rose, my sweetheart; this
Perfect blossom to my fair,
Sweetest flower of flowers rare."—

Happy yesterday!
Ah, poor rose you gave me, dear,
Though but yesterday
Her lost loveliness and grace
Must to later bloom give place;
Still so frail, today's will die,
Life to all, a kiss—a sigh;
Rose of yesterday!

Will Love's rose you gave me, dear
Gave but yesterday,
Outlive chance and change and woe,
All that Life may bring us, though
Rose of lips and cheek depart,
Still shall heart respond to heart
Just as yesterday?

THE CALIFORNIA MEADOW LARK

What joy, dear lark, wells in your liquid
trill,

What hopes that silver cadence scarce
conceals

From us, and to your dreaming mate re-
veals!

Harsh was your querulous note or mute,
until

The summer drought fled at the south wind's
will;

Then in the pauses of the rain appeals

Your warble clear, while swift the new
grass steals

On field and upland to each waiting hill.

Now, though such rapture thrills your song,
though sweet

Those haunting falls of melody we hear

In your low, restless flight (still hovering
near

That hidden nest your love, and Spring, to
greet),

Yet, lark, within your strain some nameless,
fleet

And subtle grief compels a sudden tear!

UNATTAINED

Some day the song that rings unsung
In haunting measures through my dreams,
 With cadence sweet eluding still
 Or voice or pen, may linger till
I catch its harmony that seems
Now fluted by an angel's tongue,
Ah, lyric grand that hearts may sway
 Some day, some day.

Some day the scenes that swiftly change
On Fancy's magic canvas wide,
 Isles of the Blest, or castles wrought
 In dreams, with gorgeous colors fraught,
Some hand now baffled and denied
May grasp these airy visions' range;
While wondering crowds their plaudits say
 Some day, some day.

Some day our ships now freighted deep
With hopes, with wealth from unknown
 shores
 May swift or slow, their voyage past,
 Find harbor in our hearts at last;
And sweet fruition, untold stores
Of longed for treasures we shall reap,
Fly, shining sails on homeward way
 Some day, some day.

Some day that song unwritten yet,
The view sublime that mocks all skill,
 The ship delaying, wish repressed,
 Sweet dreams we cherish, half confessed,
Some happy day may garner still.
Along Hope's golden ways we set
Our eager feet, and longing pray
 "Some day, some day."

LOVE'S SHADOW

In every joy deep dwells the thought of
thee;

Thus daily pleasures mount to heights of
bliss.

The tints of sky, the violet's breath, the kiss
Of southern sun—delights divine to me
These common gifts when shared thus con-
stantly.

So, too, the solitude of pain I miss,
Its keenest sting, dear Heart, all lost in this
Warm, tender clasp of thy quick sympathy.
And Grief, avert thy tearful eyes, for know
I fear thee not when falls the whisper low
"I love you, dear." Dark Grief and cruel
pain

Those words assuage.—But thou, stern
Death! I pray

With trembling voice and hushed heart day
by day

Thou might'st, in this vast world, forget
us twain!

OMNIA VINCIT AMOR

To love and understand, dear Heart!
What richer dole
Could Fate, with lavish hand impart
To fainting soul,
While to the vast unknown, regret
Linked with despair
Scourge us adown life's pathway, set
With thorn and snare?

To love! At many a shrine there burns
That rosy flame
Before an idol who returns
Love but in name
To slaves who waste in worship blind
Rich frankincense,
In constant sacrificing find
Their recompense.

For these no mutual thrall; sweet spell
With subtle power
To banish fear, and swift dispel
The darkest hour,
To reach a hand whose pulses beat
With answering thrill,
And love-light wake in eyes that meet
Responsive still.

Fortune may pipe her gayest air,
Fame smile, and power;
If Love refuse his presence fair,
Unblest that hour.
Crowned with success, with honor, yet
The heart alone,
Denied its kindred soul, regret
Claims for her own.

To love and understand—though roll
Wide seas between,
Love spans the chasm, and soul to soul
Crosses unseen.
From heart to heart leaps swiftest thought
Untrammelled, free,
Till distance shrinks, and space is naught
For sympathy.

TO-MORROW

A rainbow art thou, fair To-morrow, still
Luring us onward with that fabled gold
Where ends thy far arch. Blithe we follow
—till
Death doth our steps withhold!

Eager to garner that illusive store,
Blindly we hasten toward the shining way,
Unheeding half the blossoms crushed before,
Thy fields we leave, To-day.

AT THE MISSION DOLORES

A quaint old church, whose sweet Castilian
name

A century's use has left still sadly sweet,
Set in an odorous sea of tangled bloom

Whose billows, seldom stirred by wan-
dering feet,
Sweep to the steadfast hills, that reverent
stand

Apart a little, from this silent land.

For here has Death so long hushed trem-
bling Life

With icy finger, that in awe profound
The very world of Nature listens. Here

No quick, glad trill of bird, nor drowsy
sound

Of velvet bee; in languid tranced repose
A butterfly hangs poised above a rose.

The distant city's ceaseless roar comes faint

Like murmurs of a shell to listening ear;
The golden sunlight sleeps on ruined tombs;

The dust beneath has blossomed year by
year

Into white roses, till their lithe lengths
clasp

A wilderness of beauty in their grasp.

Forgotten are the dead who slumber here,

Though marble carved with many a cur-
ious fret,

Gray and o'ergrown with moss, bears prom-
ise vain

Of endless grief. We read with vague
regret

And turn, with sudden tears, where long
grass waves

O'er row on row of short and nameless
graves.

At the Mission Dolores

Yet idle seems all grief; to wounded hearts
Like sweetest balm come thoughts of
peaceful rest,
Of weary toil a close,—of dreamless sleep
With tired hands folded on a quiet breast.
Ah, Love Divine, whose tender pity sends
Thine angel Death and such poor marred
lives ends!

And yet to die! The words, this perfect
day
When lovely April smiles with dreamy
charm,
Bring sudden horror; through the sunny air
A weird chill creeps; the heart in quick
alarm
Thrills every pulse with strange, unreason-
ing dread.
The place seems haunted by a century's
dead.

And though the golden haze of noon hangs
warm
And glowing in the thickets all aflame
With scarlet blossoms, yet with subtle spell
Death and decay the silent city claim,
And cast the awful shadow of the tomb
Across the vivid hues and rose's bloom.

A MISSING LINK OF THE PAST

Where, where is the time-honored apron,
The apron our grandmothers knew?
It was ample and checked, it was ribbon-
bedecked,

Nay, 'twas every known fabric or hue.
And the linen ones whiter than snowdrifts,
So glossy with patience and starch!
Now where have they vanished, or has Prog-
ress banished
Them all in her up-to-date march?

Say, where is that cute little apron
With pocket adorned with a bow?
(Fascinations untold did that small pocket
hold

For the fingers and eyes of each beau.)
Such dainty, such furbelowed aprons,
Each ruffled or ribboned or laced,
With strings most alluring, embracing,
securing
It safe to her trim slender waist!

Ah, where is that dearest of aprons
So snowy, so soft and so cool,
When "mother's lap" cured every sorrow
endured,
Every heartbreak of playground or
school?

It is folded in lavender, yellowed
With time and my kisses and tears;
Her sweet face recalling, her fond caress
falling
It summons from long, lonely years.

A Missing Link of the Past

And where is that old-fashioned apron,
The apron no new woman wears,
Since her smart tailor-gown most correctly
 would frown
On such feminine frippery and snares?
Then what earthly occasion to wear it
 Would office or clubroom allow?
No small hands detaining, no home-cares
 constraining,
No apron-strings tether her now!

Dame Fashion, restore the lost aprons,
 Make womanly home-life the style!
Our ball gowns neglect and our tailors reject,
 Reverse Folly's wheel just a little
And bring back the old days when only
 The home seemed the dearest, the best,
When Cupid completely each manly heart
 neatly
Bound fast with those apron-strings blest!

LIFE'S PROMISE

The promise of life! How it leads us, alluring

With rainbows of hope through the fields
of to-day,
And, ever that fairy-gold bent on securing,
We follow, unheeding the rough, thorny way.

Blest promise of life, for to-day may be
lonely

Or dreary, or sad with the bitterest woe,
Yet gardens of Arcady smile for us, only
Beyond, just beyond these dark shadows,
we know.

Bright promise of life, to each spirit foretelling

Some radiant vision of power or success,
Of wealth, with its bubble of gold proudly
swelling,
Of honors—or Fame with immortal caress.

That promise of life, shall we win, thus fulfilling

Those dreams of life's morning, its noon-day
hopes, too?
Who knows? Or who cares in the happiness
thrilling
From "castles in Spain" ever builded
anew?

Life's Promise

Then here's to the promise of life! May it
brighten

With magical sunshine our fast-flying
years!

Some good angel's gift unto mortals, to
lighten

With glimpses of Paradise, earth and its
tears.

DOWN O' THE THISTLE

On airy wings, these sunny August days,
Slow sails the thistledown;
Through quivering seas of shimmering
golden haze
The fairy shallops float in aimless ways
And touch at many ports; but wanderers
yet,
For distant harbors are their light sails
set,
Though all too frail for voyage long, at last
Each bush and briar holds stranded vessels
fast,
While heaped in drafts of summer fallen
snow
Whole argosies lie wrecked the hedge
below.

But when the tradewinds sweep with desolate
cry,
Fast, fast the thistledown,
Sped by the mad blasts, wildly flutters high
Above the trees all landward blown, to fly
And seek in sudden turns and circlings
wide
A shelter by the fierce gale still denied.
While from their moorings torn, the captives
rise
In snowy swarms like startled butterflies;
Far, far they go, and fade in headlong
flight
Against the gray sky, from my eager sight.

The harvest of the winds thus reaped in
haste—

Poor wandering thistledown—
Is swiftly sowed in fields remote and waste
That fringe the dusty roads, whose bounds
are traced

By ragged ranks of crowded stalks that
show

But empty silvery crowns, from friend
or foe

Kept safe by sturdy spines. The vanished
seeds

The early rains shall find, as onward speeds
The flying year, till under April skies
In countless hosts the purple blossoms rise.

THE GIRL I USED TO LOVE

The girl I used to love—ah, still
Her brown eyes haunt me (chiefly
When smoking in the twilight's hush
My world rolls backward briefly).
Dear eyes that held within their depths
A look I've cherished ever
Though fate, or folly, swept apart
Our hearts and paths forever.

The girl I used to love—her laugh
(Sweet lingering echo) stirring
My pulses yet as when we stood
Long at her gate conferring;
I did not tell—she may have guessed—
The love my heart o'erflowing,
So there the parting of our ways
Each leagues asunder going.

The girl I used to love—so long
Ago by slow years counting.
Or was it yesterday I watched
Her swift warm blushes mounting
And I, poor fool, unversed in love
Of Cupid, never guessing
'Twas mine, and not some other's name
Her maiden heart confessing!

The Girl I Used to Love

The girl I used to love—ah, me,
I love her still, her only,
Though here disconsolate I sit,
A bachelor gray and lonely.
Perchance what “might have been,” her
heart
At twilight keeps presenting,
Dear laughing girl I used to love,
Lost sweetheart I’m lamenting!

JUNE

(Among the Redwoods)

Along the stream our idle footsteps lingered,
The happy stream that hurried all the day
Round mossy boulders, or o'er golden shallows

Where cool and dark the trembling shadows lay.

Above us towered the redwoods, straight and stately,
And higher yet the scarred cliffs boldly rose;
Each breath we drew was perfumed with the summer,
For us and Love, the silent, charmed repose.

"Sweet, sweet" the oriole called, and by your heartbeats
Fast, fast against my arm, I knew you heard;

"Sweet, sweet" again; our glances met, and softly

Your voice in passionate cadence mocked the bird.

I felt your kiss, your tender arms enfolding,
Ah, vanished June, oh stern, relentless Fate—

To Life's dull round we turned with weary longing

For saddest joys, the joys we knew too late.

We parted then, with every pulse rebelling
Against the ban that set our lives apart;
You were all vows, and I all tears and sigh-
ing
While wildly throbbed each hopeless,
broken heart.

DECEMBER

(*At Shreve's*)

To-day we met, the Christmas throng around
us,

You chose a ring to please your "latest
flame,"

And I the diamonds old De Witt had prom-
ised—

Four figures, too—before the "day" I'd
name.

You wished me joy in accents very chilly
And praised my taste—ah, Will, that was
unkind—

The choice was mamma's but—his vows are
lasting

Not airy nothings, "summer girls" to bind.

Had you been true, no diamonds, Will, had
bought me;

But no, your heart the clubs, the races
hold.

A bitter lesson for a "bud" you taught me,
That girls are toys and nothing lasts but
gold.

Yet as we talked and o'er the city's clamor
The low, soft murmur of that stream I
heard,

Those golden hours when Love was ours,
still haunt me,

The oriole's call, your voice that mocked
the bird.

FLOTSAM

O, wounded bird, upon the waters lying,
Thy ruffled breast laved by the ripples
long,
Thy wild eye dimmed, poor bird, thou'rt
slowly dying,
While yet the mountain echoes breathe thy
song.

Out with the tide on helpless wings thou'rt
drifting
Far from thy haunts, out toward the glow-
ing west,
Only thy glazing eyes to heaven lifting
In dumb, pathetic longing for thy nest.

Dear sheltered nest, where sits thy mate low-
calling,
Or stills her tender notes to hear thy war-
ble gay,
While over thee the evening damps are fall-
ing,
And ebbs thy life, as ebbs the tide away.

Slow from the west the sunset light is fading,
Blends in the sky a mingled gold and blue;
Dark lies the bay beneath the mountain's
shading,
Three distant sails gleam white within the
view.

Flotsam

While thou, poor bird, with shattered pin-
ions beating

The dark, cold waves that lap thy crim-
soned breast,

Never again thou'lt sing the morning greet-
ing;

Long ere the dawn thy weary wings shall
rest.

Dim in the distance lie the sloping ranges

Of hazy hills drawn 'gainst the misty blue;

Grim Tamalpais, the mighty giant, changes

His amber mantle to a leaden hue.

Darker it grows, a dying flame yet burning

Low in the west where last the sunlight
lay;

With saddened hearts we leave thee, home-
ward turning,

And as we go, thy short life slips away.

All through the twilight as we're idly sailing

The ghostly space the harbor lights illumine,

Ever I hear thy lonely mate's low wailing

That cannot reach thee, wrapped in end-
less gloom.

AFTER THE FIRST RAINS

Folded are your wings, O winds of summer,
Resting after long and tireless flight
O'er the curving, heaving breast of ocean,
From the caverns deep of western night;
Lulled to sleep, O tradewinds, once so
strong,
While at peace from days of clamorous
raging
Smiles the fair land you have scourged
full long.

Hushed the dreary foghorn's sad persistence,
Warning ever with that dolorous note
Of the snowy legions, swift approaching,
Wraiths of vapory mist that lingering
float
Silently the treacherous breakers o'er;
Blotting too with gray and clinging billows
Circling hills and lines of farther shore.

Mornings now with wild, sweet fragrance
blowing,
While the larks trill eager songs and
clear;
Just the faintest green on southern hill-
sides,
Soft the quail call in the coverts near.
Weird, chill fog and gray sky vanished
quite;
Quickening sunlight o'er the glad world
pouring,
Just to breathe is rapture; life, delight.

After the First Rains

Changed the brilliant blue of summer
 heavens,

 Arching now in tenderest azure dim,
Flecked with filmy sails of cloudlets drift-
 ing

 To the far horizon's crystal rim;

 While we question, "Is it sea or sky?"
Clouds and ships on that vague edge of
 silver

 Meet and vanish, fading swiftly by.

Steeped in floods of soft October sunshine,

 With late tenderness caressing still,

Sweep of bay and purple ranges distant

 Float in clearest, farthest vision, till

 Comes the sunset, flushing near and far

Quiet sea and sky where hangs the crescent

 Of the faint moon and one mellow star.

CHRISTMAS NEAR AND FAR

The Christmas bells ring out—though bleak
December

Far, far remote appears
To hearts that, in our summer land,
remember

Gay feasts of other years
In colder climes, beyond the palm, yet
breathing

Sweet fragrance of the pine
From trackless woodlands, where deep
snows were wreathing
Their glittering garlands fine.

Then rang the bells in mellow cadence
chiming

Through keen and frosty air—
Rang happiness, our answering heartbeats
timing

The Christmas chorus there.
But on this Western shore (an alien seem-
ing

To winter's rigorous hold),
Perplexed we pause, to deem December's
dreaming

As flowers of June unfold!

Or from the high cloud spaces swift de-
scending

The spirit of the rain
Hovers above the waiting hillsides, bending
Low to the thirsty plain.

Her vapory mantle on the south wind flow-
ing

Athwart the mountain's crest;
Her hands outstretched with gracious ben-
ison, sowing

Promise of harvest blest.

Christmas Near and Far

Soon follow emerald leagues of young grain
 springing,
 Bright gold on sunny slopes
Our poppies scatter, while the larks dream,
 singing
 Of love and wakened hopes.
Stirs the warm earth with quickening
 growth, and tender
 The blue of Christmas skies;
Radiant with floods of soft yet brilliant
 splendor
 The low sun mounts—and dies!

NOT FOR OURSELVES ALONE

With anxious heart and feverish brain
His body racked by constant strain

Man heaps up gold
Or land or jewels—though the whole
Does not content his sordid soul

In Greed's strong hold.

"More, more," he cries. "A million! Ten!
I shall begin to live but then!"

And yet—and yet
Death checks his course with icy hand;
His millions but a grave command,
Nor buy regret.

"A wretched being Fortune's slave;
Not wealth, but fame, but power, I crave;

The power to sway
Men's hearts—until my honored name
The archives of the world shall claim."

So others pray.

Granted the wish. Then on Time crept.
Their little circles smiled—or wept.

And yet—and yet
The hearts that answered to their call
Respond to newer masters. All
Save Death forget.

Not For Ourselves Alone

“But Love eternal lives.” So sigh
Or sing as golden hours go by,
That deathless Two
Who deem the world exists to share
Their bliss, or quake at their despair,
While passion’s new.
’Twere vain to bid them understand
That Love and Grief go hand in hand.
And yet—and yet
A month—a year—’tis master, slave;
Dissension, strife; Love flown, they save
Naught but regret

Wealth, Fame or Love, how brief your stay
With those who crave your magic sway
For selfish meed;
Ignoble gains, and empty name,
And love that is but passion’s flame
Are dross indeed.
To live for other’s good! Let this
Be sum and source of mortal bliss,
And yet—and yet
Abjuring self, thou’lt win a place
Of brotherhood with all the race.

TWO HEARTS

Sad heart, true heart, brooding o'er thy
sorrow,

Dreaming of the vanished joys of days
gone before,

Lost in utter darkness, despairing of a
morrow.

By cruel memory haunted — a torture
never o'er.

Here is April smiling, and meadow larks a-
trilling,

“Spring is hope, and summer brings its
certain, sweet fulfilling,”

While all the garden borders with violets
are blue.

Sad hearts, dead hearts colder still are
lying

Pulseless in forgotten graves, the wild-
flowers gay above,

Hearts that throbbed as madly, hearts that
left in dying

Sweeter hopes than thine, and dreams as
bright with love.

Thy life is yet before thee; vain, vain such
wild repining;

See, through a fleeting mist of rain, the
golden sunlight shining.

The past returns — ah, never, but April
every year.

Two Hearts

Glad heart, proud heart, tearful prayers
breathing—

Happy tears that spring from joy too
deeply sweet and keen—

Round thy dear one ever the tenderest
fancies wreathing,

Praying “Heaven shield my darling from
the sorrow I have seen;”

Loving, ah, so blindly, yet with divinest
feeling,

April’s promise sweet is thine, for sum-
mer’s swift revealing;

Before the early violets wane, thy rose of
Love shall bloom.

Glad heart, sad heart, each so wildly beat-
ing,

One welling o’er with rapture, one
crushed by dark despair;

Thou thrilling to Life’s sadness, thou giving
gayest greeting,

For both alike the tender smile of dreamy
April fair.

Life’s mysteries hurry by us, and leave us
questioning, yearning,

But this year’s spring shall wane, yet wake
with golden days returning,

And countless summers dawn and die, while
Love and Life go on.

FATHER JUNIPERO SERRA

Out of the past, a century's slow lapse lending
That half-forgotten age
The glowing charm of Spanish romance,
blending
With history's sterner page;
Out of the past one name in song or story
Illumes that noble throng
Of Mission Padres, as some planet's glory
The lesser stars among.

Serra renowned, the cross of Christ uprearing
Within this halcyon clime,
Whate'er our creed we honor him, revering
His steadfast soul sublime;
True heart and strong, from its own fullness
reaching
Love's helping hand again;
Lips that were touched with fire from
heaven, preaching
Peace and good-will to men.

Crumbling to-day are Mission arch and
tower,
Sweet Angelus bells no more
Through the long corridors at twilight hour
Chime silver carillons o'er;
Fading the race who worshipped, but enduring
Their shepherd's name, foretold
In boyhood, by stern Destiny, adjuring
Him to this heathen fold.

Father Junipero Serra

Faring from sunny Spain, brave Serra.
preaching

The sacred word of God.

From ancient Vera Cruz far inland reaching

Where none but Indians trod,

A score of seasons labored, ever deeming

His infinite task undone

And countless souls forsaken—ever dream-
ing

Of converts to be won.

Not here was Serra's goal, but noontide
resting

His pilgrimage had won;

The morn's long combat o'er, yet farther
questing

The patient heart begun,

Till San Diego's natives heard, clear-ringing

Each consecrated bell

From the green belfry of an oak-tree swing-
ing

While grand Te Deums swell.

Soon rose the adobe Missions, white-walled,
gleaming

Under red roofs and quaint,

Rose the Presidio, war and peace both
deeming

Diego patron saint;

Here too, this band devoted, starving, dying,

As the first martyrs shed

Their blood, the seed from which the Church,
defying

Death and destruction, spread.

Father Junipero Serra

Famed other Missions, Luis, Clara, nearer
Dolores, and Gabriel,
Far Capistrano, while most loved and dearer,
San Carlos of Carmel;
Here centered Serra's heart, returning ever
After each toilsome quest:
Here conquered Death—and with supreme
endeavor
He whispered "I will rest."

Under the ruined church he founded, lying
In his last slumber deep,
Through the long grass the sea-winds blow,
and sighing
His only requiem keep,
Yet moldering Missions, even his grave
may perish
Into oblivion wide,
While Serra's name shall reverent memory
cherish,
True martyr, glorified!

Sure, kissing is dangerous indeed
Entailing no end of confusion,
For it often to marriage may lead,
That certian and swift disillusion.

PHANTASMA

When, hesitant, the rain's light footfalls
greet

These arid hills, long waiting, brown and
bare,

What faintly-answering fragrance fills the
air?

A happy sigh from prisoned wild-flowers
sweet,

Gliding like ghosts each from its deep re-
treat

At near release of weary drouth's despair.

Swift fancy bids the long procession fare
Till hills and intervalles gay ranks repeat

With gold of buttercups, blue iris, dear

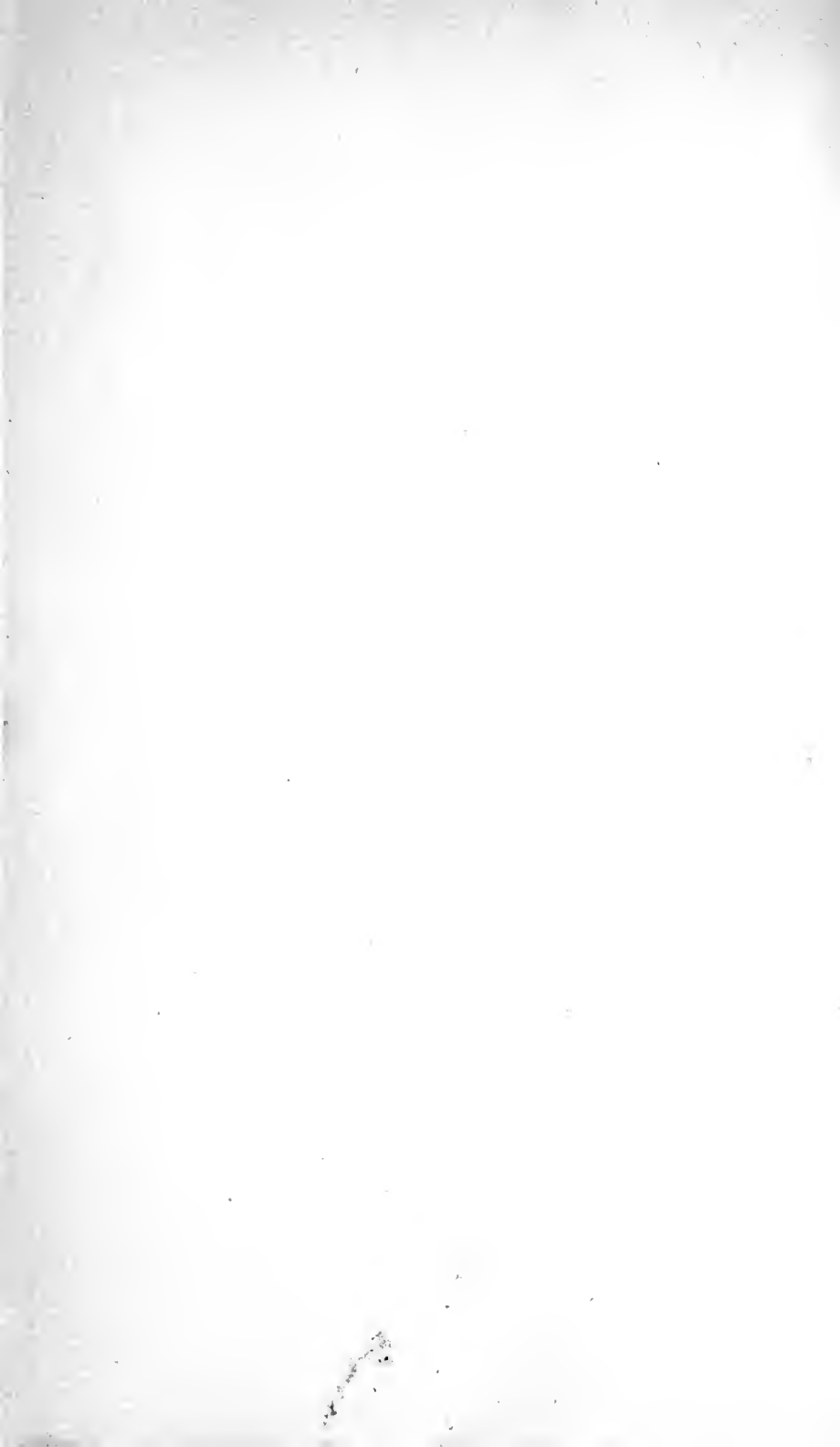
And sweetest violets; here the orange flare

Of joyous poppies, lupines straggling
there;

Bright perfumed cohorts, viewless yet how
clear!

Phantoms of summer, wraiths of lost de-
light,

The first rain summons into airy flight.



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